

353 Food Allergy

Area:	Summary of Updates: (Implemented Oct. 1, 2013)
Definition:	Food allergies - adverse effects from an immune response occurring when exposed to a specific food (No change to assigning Risk 353 – must have been diagnosed by a physician or someone working under a physician)
Justification:	Food Allergies - <ul style="list-style-type: none">Is the body’s immune system responding to a harmless food as if it were a harmful; can be life-threateningIndividuals with a family history of allergies are most susceptible; can occur at any age Food Allergies vs. Intolerances - <ul style="list-style-type: none">Food intolerances differ from food allergies because they don’t involve the immune systemFood intolerances are often misdiagnosed as food allergiesPossible food intolerance causes include food poisoning, histamine toxicity, or reactions to food additives Common Food Allergens – (children sometimes outgrow an allergy) <div><div>SoyEggs</div><div>WheatCow’s milk (and foods made from cow’s milk)</div><div>Peanuts and tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, brazil nuts)</div><div>Fish and crustacean shellfish (e.g. shrimp, crayfish, lobster, and crab)</div></div> Symptoms – (usually occur within minutes to 4 hours after ingestion; diagnosis can be difficult): <div><div>HivesWheezingLow blood pressureNausea</div><div>SwellingCoughVomitingLife threatening shock (most severe form of allergy)</div></div> Prevention - <ul style="list-style-type: none">Exclusive breastfeeding may decrease risk of developing allergiesFor high-risk infants being formula fed, a partially-hydrolyzed (partially-digested) formula may decrease riskThere’s no evidence to support the use of soy formula as a prevention strategyThere’s no prevention benefit by avoiding potentially allergenic foods during pregnancy, lactation, infancy Management - <ul style="list-style-type: none">Physician determines a management plan: food avoidance and a treatment strategy if exposure occursFood avoidance includes avoiding similar foods within a food group likely to cause reaction Implications for WIC – Through participant-centered counseling staff can (based on participant concerns/interests): <ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitor prenatal weight gain for women and growth for infants/childrenPromote exclusive breastfeedingHelp identify appropriate WIC foods and tailor WIC food packages accordinglyEducate participants about understanding food labels and identifying allergenic foodsEducate participants on planning nutritionally adequate meals and snacks while avoiding allergenic foodsRoute chart to RD for infants/children; RD may consult with the physician to assess if a possible re-challenge of the offending food(s) is appropriate
Clarification:	Food allergies are diagnosed by a HCP by – <ul style="list-style-type: none">Physical exam and evaluating medical history including potential allergies (symptoms, timing, triggers)Testing (type of tests selected varies depending on the evaluation)<div><div>Food Elimination DietAllergen-specific serum IgE (sigE)Skin Prick Text (SPT)</div><div>Oral Food ChallengeAtopy Patch Test</div></div>